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PARISIAN PARAGRAPHS.

Some Ideas in Regard to the War.

And a General Resume of Doings in France.

PARIS, December 19.

The uneasiness is spreading in reference to the Tonkin adventure. The French commence to have a hazy perception that the Chinese are also cunning at fence, and that the pacification of Annam will require a corps d'armee. What value will France have for her men and money? Each soldier sent represents in hard cash 1,500 francs. It becomes a serious question, if the home organization of the army has to meet the wants in the extreme east. France and Germany are on equal footing in point of fighting men and material. They have each eighteen corps d'armee excluding Algeria. Now in case of a war, and the French believe that will be certain in spring as the return of the swallows and green peas, France would have to send two corps d'armee to keep Algeria and Tunisia safe; two more must be told off to watch Italy; one, to keep an eye on Spain, and one, already in China. Thus the defensive power in France as compared with Germany would be reduced by one-third. The deputies vote all the credits for Tonkin, but leave the responsibility with ministers. This, as Clemenceau reminded the Solons, is the washing-the-hands, the Pontius-Pilate policy. It arrives in time too, as the duty has just been reduced on soap.

The charm that existed a few years ago in the material prosperity, riches and progress of France has been broken. The government to square up all accounts, intends negotiating another loan next month. This fresh addition to the national debt, means an increase in taxation, and the latter is 30 per cent higher than in other countries. That is a smart handicap for French products already turned out at too costly a figure, competing with other nations, and which will throw the commercial ball into the hands of Germany, whose cheap goods commence to inundate France herself. Thus there are other ways to cripple France independent of Sedan.

The Paris Exchange or Bourse, is now but the shade of its former self; negotiations are stagnant, or transacted in other monetary centres. Paris is gradually ceasing to be a "head centre" for stocks and shares; business dwindles week by week. Yet the Bourse two years ago gave the tone to the money market of the world; sales and purchases were enormous, easily effected, and loans readily negotiated. It was by this vitality of the Bourse, that France was able to pay the war indemnity of five milliards.

The "nation's farthings," as Lully so called the revenue, have been voted excessively, prodigally, and unproductively. The milch cow evidently is becoming dry. And to bring back the supply of milk, the *Debats* and the *Economiste* which represent the political economy of France, recommend the spirited colonial policy that has landed the country where it is. Colonies, that Frenchmen avoid; French emigrants that prefer America; a population, stationary; and veritable corps d'armees of used up politicians sent to administer colonies, they themselves representing the colonies.

It is not astonishing the unfortunate situation that has arrived. M. Beaulieu, a high economical authority, recommends manufacturers, now that they have got no work to do, to improve the unshining hour, to study the causes by which they have been eclipsed, and adopt the ways and means of their well-to-do competitors. The retail trade is bad, and the present has ever been its best season. People who were in the habit of expending 100 francs at this epoch of the year, have reduced their figure to 50 francs stratum, expend nothing at all.

The press commences to speak, at last, on the Suez convention. They all run in the same groove as usual, implying thus a unique impulsion. M. de Lesseps is reproached with having virtually handed over the administration of the canal to perfide Albion. The *Figaro*, never more amusing than when it attempts to be serious, describes the convention as a "Britannic felony." Words, words, as Hamlet says.

Rochefort suggests that since the Annamites commence to give "bad coffee" to their emperors, France had better erect a factory, to have ready a stock of kings. She has already a "museum of sovereigns." Madagascar might one day become a client, and the Congo is in the market, since king Makoko has had to take himself off, as if he were a Charles X, or a Louis-Philippe. In the sixteenth century, that noble era for sovereigns, the Congo, like Europe, had its brilliant ruler, in Lingba, queen of Angola. She prescribed polygamy, and the *Tombo* or human sacrifices on the death of a crowned head. To give a proof of her conversion, on the day when her new church was opened, she married, though aged 75, one of her young courtiers. *La foi qui n'agit pas, est ce une foi sincere?* At 80 years of age, she figured with the ladies of her court, in an amazon quadrille d'honneur, and handled her spear with the agility of a wench of 25. Nay, more, she had made strides in civiliza-

tion, that she, copying the Christians of the west, ordered disbelievers in her doxy to be burned.

The Com's Muilly-Chalou and Baron Meechin, hardly reposed after their five years over-land journey through Asia and the Russ as, intend to pay a flying visit to the Soudan, and let us know all about the Mahdi and his goings on. If he be an Abdullah-ben-saed, or a noun of multitude. The young Duc de Morny, intends to give up jupons and ballet dancing, as he desires to accompany the amateur expedition. "De Morny will be in it," as was said of his papa, when a speculation was launched under the second empire. The Mahdi may end his days like Abdullah, who was captured by Ibrahim Pascha; the latter divided the "We chabites into two corps, drove one, toward the Persian Gulf, and the other, commanded by Abdullah, was concentrated in the town of Derajish, in the middle of Arabia, distant twenty days from Cairo. About 2,000 Wechabites, double the number of Hicks Pasha's force were slain Abdullah, his treasures and family, captured and conveyed to Cairo, where 1,000,000 of piastres, paid out of the government, was expended on illuminations and tar barrels. Mecca and Medina were restored to the Sultan. Abdullah was sent to Constantinople, promenade in chains through the streets, tortured by the populace, and decapitated. It is thus dangerous playing at false prophet.

Though the times here are a little out of joint, that's no reason why young folks ought not to have their cakes and ale. The sugar bakers' and kniot-knack shops are well provisioned with attractions sufficient to make young France forget the decalogue. The sugar productions are not so much new, as newly packed, and the "cases" display a decided leaning to Japanese art, fine as well as diabolical. In the cheap jewelry line, the novelties are legion and ingenious. Flower designs are in the ascendant, next reptiles, and then some of the best known beasts, birds and fishes. Mexican feathers as raw material, enter largely into the composition of these articles of the season. As there is nothing like leather, pocketbooks are made of *peau de dinde*. This means perhaps fewer tough turkeys at Christmas. The pig all pork is now free to enter France, is converted into a pen holder; his sides are of cocoon shell, his tail and trotters in silver, and his bristles, like those of the fretful porcupine, do the rack duty. Jambo's head seems to have been selected by common artistic consent, as model for a cigar ash-pan.

Then the Christmas trees, though the season has been bad fruits, are well laden. It would require the patience of Homer to catalogue them and of a Lioness to classify them. Xmas is peculiarly the festival for children, but their elders desire to be of the party. In France, the revels generally commence on the eve; being in Republic may explain why we have no "lord of misrule." The French are not commencing, but recommending to vie with Saxons and Teutons in observing Christmas. But how few think of toasting the health of Bishop Telephone, who in 183 first organized the joys of the period, though it was only in the fourth century the fathers fixed on the 25th of December. There are writers who question this date, as it is the vigorous season in Judea and not favorable to out door living. But we are told, "there were shepherds abiding in the fields," and the essential point is, the fact celebrated. In the time of Charlemagne the year commenced at Christmas.

Mirth is, was and shall be, the distinguishing trait of Christmas, though St. Bernard protested against people being given to merry making. But did not the puritans at one time place mince pies in their index *Expurgatorius*, because being made long, they were an image of the sacred manager? On Xmas eve the beggars are let loose on society; they are free to sing "ballads of their best," and the little children in the south of France combine fire-works with charity, as on torrowing sous to the poor, such are enclosed in paper with loose ends, the ends are ignited, so that the maim, the halt, and even the blind, can see the manna falling like shooting stars.

There is not a department in France but has its Nael or Carol, for the nativity enlisted not only to highest talent in art and theology, but in music. Handel's greatest triumph is the Messiah. These Naels are sung in the churches at midnight on Christmas eve, and midnight church service, is not uncommon in the Isle of Man, for the festival ranks third among those of the church, coming after Easter and Whitauitide. Candle burning and love, are peculiar to *Weihnachtsfest* or Yule day. In the South of France, a log of an Olive tree, and a dead olive tree, is mourned as a property misfortune, but is happily as rare as a dead ass, is preserved all the year round; on the eve, this log, or *Carrique*, when the supper table is laid and decorated with lamel, is placed on the fire; a young child kneels, and implores, that during the winter season pies may keep warm, poor children and widows and old people, and that it will reign in workshops, and never burn the worker, the sailor, or ships. The most aged throw some wine on the block; its hissing, clacking and sparkling, are interpreted, that the "sweet spirit" will hear the prayer. But creature comforts are to be remembered. Legend says, that at Christmas, animals acquire the faculty of speech. If so, they ought to

hold forth only a vegetarianism. Seneca lays down, that a well-filled stomach constitutes an important part of liberty. It is curious that at Christmas-tide, pig figures largely on the bills of fare of every country. It may be a boar's head, with an orange or apple in its mouth, and rosemary for laurels, and remembrance—or, black pudding and sausages, as at the *revellions* or suppers. To these are added other *et ceteras*, too numerous to mention. The French begin to know plum pudding, only they prepare it like soup, or porridge, now strange to say, in the days of Bolton Abbey of the olden time plum pudding was similarly served.

It was the custom in the thirteenth century, according to Sainte Palaye, to present friends with cakes and a roast fowl at Xmas; bakers in some localities give clients a cylindrical shaped loaf, a degenerated model doubtless of the *Limbino*. In Holland, carp is a common dish. In a word, good eating, good drinking, good cheer, fun and mirth are the attributes of Christmas. No one has ever been known to die of a surfeit of the good things; coroners' inquests are unknown during the festival. Perhaps this may be due to the precautions the English take, according to Louis Blanc, that of laying in stocks of digestive pills along with roast beef and plum pudding. Honear, as Chamfort says, Society is divided into two classes, those who have more dinners than appetite, and more appetites than dinners; but crumbs fall liberally at Xmas for every Lazarus.

THE REASON.

As Governor Hamilton boarded a train on the C. & A. road, at Joliet, recently, he took a seat by a strange gentleman going to Springfield. After a time, they fell into a conversation, and the stranger soon told Mr. Hamilton that he was on a mission to see the governor.

"What kind of looking cove is the governor?" asked the stranger.

"Well, he looks very much like me, has red hair and pink eyes, a moustache, and an able-bodied appetite."

"I am most afraid to tackle him. He is as stiff as a poker, I wonder?"

"No; but they do say in those infernal newspapers that he's an old stiff," said the governor with a sneer.

"I want to see him bad; my son's in jail for shooting a preacher, and I want him pardoned out."

"But the governor will not and cannot pardon him."

"Yes he will, for I've brung \$33 and a demijohn full of the choicest."

"But he will not pardon him."

"Yes he will, or he's a bigger fool than I always tack him to be."

"He will not pardon your son, sir."

"Well, you old sorrel top, how do you know?"

"Because, sir, I am the governor, and I will not grant a pardon to the son of such an old ass as you."

The stranger loon faded from the scene.

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